



YoungStar Participation Policy

Effective 5/1/2013

Programs experience the greatest success in YoungStar in pursuit of quality improvement efforts when they are engaged, informed, and responsive. This policy addresses some of the barriers to productive participation and the process and consequences of poor participation.

Failure to respond to YoungStar communications, and cancellation of or habitual absenteeism from scheduled YoungStar appointments prevents quality improvements, assessment, and ratings from being completed in a timely manner. Poor follow-through on application or re-application timelines and agreed upon quality improvement efforts has the same affect.

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) and YoungStar Staff want to maintain a consistent, ethical way to set professional boundaries and expectations related to following expectations and following through with scheduled visits. These positive behaviors allow consulting and assessment time to be spent on consultation and coaching rather than follow-up and re-scheduling. The more time spent on-site focused on quality improvement efforts, the greater the program's success is in their quality improvement efforts.

To accomplish this, every participant in YoungStar who would like any form of onsite technical assistance (technical assistance, Technical Rating or Formal Rating with Observation) is required to complete a YoungStar Contract and sign a Technical Consultation Participation Agreement before beginning on-site services. The Technical Consultation Participation Agreement, outlined in this document, explains the rules around positive participation in YoungStar services.

Participation Policies

(For definitions of key examples of poor participation that are referenced in the policies, please see the last section of this policy with the subheading Definitions.)

- 1.) On-site services participation policies shall be communicated to participating child care programs in the YoungStar Technical Consultation Participation Agreement which states the following:

- **Prior Notification**

- A child care program must provide notice of at least one business day if a visit needs to be rescheduled for non-emergency reasons.
- A provider must give a two hours' notice in the case of documentable emergency.
- The child care program must contact their technical consultant within 24 hours to reschedule the visit.

- **Cancellations/No Access**

- If a child care program fails to give notice of one business day to cancel a visit, they will lose a technical consulting visit.
- If a program fails to give notice within a two hour timeframe for a documentable emergency, they will lose a technical consulting visit.
- If the child care program fails to re-schedule a cancelled visit within two working days, they will be sent a certified letter letting them know that if they do not schedule their visit within two working days, they will experience the following consequences:
 - no longer be eligible for on-site consulting services for one calendar year
 - no longer be eligible for micro-grants for one calendar year
 - a YoungStar Change Form will be submitted and the program will receive an automated rating

- If a program does not accept receipt of a certified letter regarding missed visits after two attempts in a two week period, the program will be moved to an automated rating and will not be eligible for on-site services, micro-grants, and a new rating until their next anniversary date.
- A program is allowed to re-schedule two times within the guidelines. If the program re-schedules three times, they will lose a visit.
- If there is a pattern of cancellation or no access, consultants and/or raters should contact local certifiers and licensors for possible follow-up. If no children are present and the Technical Consultant is suspicious of this, the fraud hot line should be called (1-877-302-FRAUD) and the program will be moved to an automated rating and will not be eligible for on-site services, micro-grants, and a new rating until their next anniversary date.

- **Micro-Grant Eligibility**

- In most cases, programs that receive technical consultation (or programs that are accredited) are eligible to receive a micro-grant if they complete a Quality Improvement Plan, a Self-Assessment, and a Purchase Plan, and have their purchases approved by a technical consultant.
- A program receiving technical consultation will **no longer be eligible** for a micro-grant if the program:
 - Cancels more than ONE technical consultation visit without appropriate prior notification (as stated above). This includes “no-show” visits.
 - Cancels more than THREE technical consultation visits total (this includes cancellations with or without appropriate prior notification, and no-show visits).
- If a program becomes ineligible for a micro-grant due to the circumstances above, the program is responsible for repaying any portion of the micro-grant that has already been expended.

- **YoungStar Staff Cancellation or Re-scheduling**

- YoungStar staff will make every effort to keep every appointment scheduled with a program.
- If, for a medical or health emergency, the YoungStar staff member needs to cancel an appointment, he/she will call the program at least two hours prior to the scheduled visit to notify the program and reschedule at that time.
- If a YoungStar staff member needs to reschedule an appointment for any other non-emergency reason, he/she will make every effort to reschedule the appointment as soon as he/she is aware of the conflict and at the program’s earliest convenience. The notification of the need to reschedule will happen at least two working days before the scheduled appointment.

2.) YoungStar Application or Re-application policies require all programs receiving Wisconsin Shares to complete a YoungStar Contract. While there are choices about the level of participation a program takes, Wisconsin Shares authorizations can be jeopardized by failure to apply or reapply to YoungStar within timelines.

- a. For new Wisconsin Shares programs, completing the YoungStar Contract should happen as soon as a program applies to serve families using Wisconsin Shares. For tips on participating in YoungStar, please go to http://dcf.wi.gov/youngstar/pdf/provider_tip_sheet.pdf
- b. For programs that are currently participating in YoungStar and will continue to participate in 2012 and beyond, contact will be made by the Department of Children and Families in writing at approximately 120 days prior to the anniversary dates of the initial rating. For tips on the reapplication process, please go to http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/pdf/reapplication_tips.pdf

3.) Programs that are eligible, and apply for a YoungStar formal rating, must abide by an additional set of participation policies. These policies are only in effect during the window of time that they could potentially receive a formal rating observation.

- a. If a Rating Observer arrives at the program on a non-blackout date, and the provider refuses a Formal Rating with Observation, the provider/program will be ineligible for a Formal Rating with Observation until the next rating cycle. The provider will be eligible for a Technical Rating at this point.

- b. If a Rating Observer arrives at the program and the provider is not at home, the center is closed, or the program is leaving for a field trip on a non-blackout date, the provider/program will be ineligible for a Formal Rating with Observation until the next rating cycle. The provider would be eligible for a Technical Rating at this point.
- c. If a program experiences an emergency on a non-blackout date, the provider/director should notify the assigned YoungStar Formal Rater as soon as possible when the emergency situation is under control. YoungStar Regional Offices and DCF will determine what qualifies as an emergency situation. In this situation, the formal rater will return on another non-blackout date to complete the rating. After one allowance for an emergency, the provider or program will be ineligible for a Formal Rating with Observation. The provider would be eligible for a Technical Rating at this point.
- d. If a Rating Observer arrives and the Director/provider indicates that there will not be more than 50% of the children in attendance for the selected classroom or family program, the Formal Rating with Observation cannot occur in that classroom or program on that day. If possible, the Rating Observer will then observe another selected classroom in a group program. If this is not possible, or if it occurs in a family program, the Formal Rating will occur on another non-blackout day. After one allowance for absence, the provider or program will be ineligible for a Formal Rating with Observation. The provider would be eligible for a Technical Rating at this point.

Definitions

Anniversary Date means the annual anniversary of the date the program was given their initial rating in YoungStar.

Cancellation means the YoungStar visits does not occur for one or more reason, including but not limited to:

- program staffing levels and absenteeism;
- lack of readiness for visit;
- lack of progress on QIP;
- illness or medical emergencies; and
- inclement weather or weather emergencies.

No-shows occur when a YoungStar staff member (Technical Consultant (TC), Technical Rater (TR), or Formal Rating Observer (FRO)) arrives for a scheduled visit and is not let into the program (for any reason), the program is closed, or programming is occurring at another location due to a field trip.

Poor participation is characterized by lack of engagement or follow-through on YoungStar quality improvement efforts by the provider.

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